

# Response On LTC Wunderle's *Through The Lens Of Cultural Awareness*

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## *Culture Defined*

The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought.  
*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*

- Culture
  - Is a shared set of traditions, belief systems, and behaviors.
  - Is shaped by history, religion, ethnic identity, language and nationality, and evolves in response to various pressures and influences.
  - Is learned through socialization...it is not inherent.

In 2006, a Professor at West Point sent me email with several studies in geography, physical and cultural, attached. These date from the early years of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Army was coming to grips with *terra incognita*. I responded as follows:

I have been looking through the attachments with the thrill I always have in audience of the spiritual, moral, and intellectual horsepower of our military leadership.

Arriving finally at the large presentation by LTC William Wunderle, I found myself concurring with his thesis and wishing he had defined culture -- i.e., established his conceptual scheme -- with the horizontal component AND the vertical component of its genesis and transmission rather than with only the horizontal component.

The horizontal component is at most half the story, to include phenomenologically, though not necessarily empirically, such as we are accustomed, conceptually and technologically to measuring/cognizing the sensory dimension (empirics). The other half, at least, of the story is the component of transcendent unity or unambiguous life which expresses itself to man with continuously self-creative power and meaning and to which man responds self-creatively in fresh expressions of culture, religion and morality.

Indeed, man's responses to the vertical component themselves drive toward transcendence of the horizontal component. Truth is, every dimension, including the inorganic, the organic, and the psychic, all of which precede the dimensions of spirit and history, drives toward transcendence of itself. This phenomenon is particularly apparent in the more complete dimensions, those of spirit and history, which distinguish man. The horizontal component always and everywhere drives above itself. This explains, for example, the processes of evolution.

The dialectic of relationship involving the vertical and horizontal components of life in all dimensions is a more accurate descriptive and therefore analytical/policy making scheme than one based solely on the horizontal component of life, such as LTC Wunderle employs.

Still, within the attenuated scope of its conceptual scheme, Wunderle's work here is most beneficial and I am sure is being taken for the help that it is for our Army and civilian planners.